

Leicestershire Police judged as 'good' at how legitimately it keeps people safe and reduces crime - HMIC

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has assessed how legitimate Leicestershire Police is at keeping people safe and reducing crime. This is the second year running HMIC has carried out inspections of this kind, which makes up part of HMIC's annual PEEL inspections.

HMIC considers a police force to be legitimate if it has the consent of the public, and if those working in the force consistently behave in a way that is fair, ethical, and within the law.

To assess this, HMIC has inspected how well forces treat the people they serve; ensure their workforce acts ethically and lawfully; and treat their workforces with fairness and respect. The findings of this inspection are included in a report, published today.

This inspection also included, for the first time, an assessment of how well forces tackle the problem of abuse of authority for sexual gain by members of its workforce. This serious form of corruption betrays the trust of the public and, while we identified some examples of good practice, there remain significant areas where forces must improve. The service needs to be more proactive in seeking out and preventing this form of corruption, and referring cases of abuse of authority to the IPCC.

HMIC found that Leicestershire Police:

- seeks feedback and challenge from the people it serves, but it needs to improve efforts to analyse that information;
- aims to treat all people with fairness and respect; and
- has a good understanding of what support the workforce needs and has introduced initiatives to promote and sustain physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

HM Inspector of Constabulary Zoë Billingham said:

“Leicestershire Police is, in general, good at legitimately keeping people safe and reducing crime. Our findings this year are consistent with last year's findings, in which we also judged the force to be good.

"Overall, the force has good processes in place across all the areas we looked at in this legitimacy inspection. The force is committed to treating the people it serves with fairness and respect, and seeks both positive feedback and challenge from the public. It does however need to further analyse the information it receives from the public, to identify and address areas it could improve upon, and ultimately further increase public trust.

"Similarly, the force deals with information relating to possible corruption well, and investigates accordingly. It could however do more to seek out this information proactively. The capacity in its anti-corruption unit would need to increase to allow this to happen. The force could also do more to clarify and reinforce what is acceptable behaviour, particularly in relation to abuse of power for sexual gain (taking advantage of a position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime).

"I am pleased to confirm that the force treats its workforce fairly and respectfully. The focus within the force on ensuring the wellbeing of staff and officers is testament to this. It is encouraging that supervisors have a comprehensive understanding of their wellbeing responsibilities."

HMIC has also published individual assessments of the leadership within each police force in England and Wales. These, along with individual reports on the legitimacy of all forces in England and Wales, are available on HMIC's website.